New Alaskans Leaderless

Trek of the '59ers Comes to Nothing

No Land, No Money No Jobs, No Food

By JOHN C. TREEN
North American Newspaper Alliance

MOOSE PASS, Alaska—Leaderless, the '59ers have learned that the promised land they came 4,500 miles for has shrunk to almost nothing.

Few homestead sites are available, it may be more than a year before the group can move in, lack of money and jobs make the situation crucial and there is question as to how many will stick it out.

The caravan of Michigan residents who set out just a month ago for the rugged Kenai Peninsula, where they plan to start a new life homesteading, now faces the question of immediate survival, as well as their livelihood in the future.

Meanwhile, Ronald Jacobowitz has resigned as leader of the '59ers, saying he "no longer wants to be the scapegoat for everything that goes wrong."

Jacobowitz' announcement came before the latest blow hit the group, which has been dogged by bad luck in the form of illness, accidents and bad weather ever since it left Detroit.

L. T. Mains, operations supervisor of the Federal Bureau of Land Management here, told them that only a few homesteads remain on the north coast of the Kenai, where they headed on the advice of Don Locke, a scout whose advance trip was financed by the '59ers.

"Locke sure gave us a bum steer," said Dick Lietz, a caravan member.

Trackless Lands

Available tracts are far from any road and the group would need a large 'cat" to haul their trailers and supplies over foot trails from which they would have to clear brush and trees as they went.

Mains pointed out another tract, where a rough tractor road and the Alaska Railroad could get them to a point on the Great Susitna River, where they could pack their supplies across the ice and take up unsurveyed lands.

"You'd have to hurry to get in there now," he said. "The big thaw and breakup is at hand. After that, you will be marooned because there is no bridge across the river. But remember that many homesteaders here went in on foot and did not come out again for two or three years."

Jacobowitz and Marino Sik, the man likely to take over leadership of the colony, faced the issues courageously and realistically.

"We'll have to set down somewhere and get jobs until we can move into our claims," Sik said. "Ron and I expect to work on the harvests in the Matanuska valley to raise a stake for equipment needed to get in to the spots we want.

"It may be a year before we can move in. We want to pick a place with possibilities, and not shy away from the difficulties."

A most likely spot, Sik seemed to think, was still in the Kenai, on a southern mountain slope. This may finally be the site of the new Alaska town the '59ers visioned as "New Michigan" when they started their pilgrimage.

Will Many Stay?

But that dream seems far away now, submerged in the physical struggle confronting the '59ers. It remains to be seen how many will stay in the face of the vast hardships that must be endured to hew out a piece of life from an alien piece of ground, rock, timber and snow.

Lack of money is a spectre facing most of them. Their troublous, protracted journey northwest cost far more than expected and their equipment is insufficient.

Many must find jobs if they are to stick it out, and yet the likely homesteads are many miles from any job openings, and from markets for crops or cattle they might raise.

Jacobowitz' withdrawal as leader came before this critical hour, but after days of criticism by some members of the group who were upset at Anchorage when they learned that a fee expected for delivery of six station wagons and a pickup truck to a rent-a-car would not be paid.

A payment of $25 for each vehicle arriving in good condition was promised. But one of the stations wagons was wrecked and all the other vehicles were damaged by flying rocks or in other mishaps.

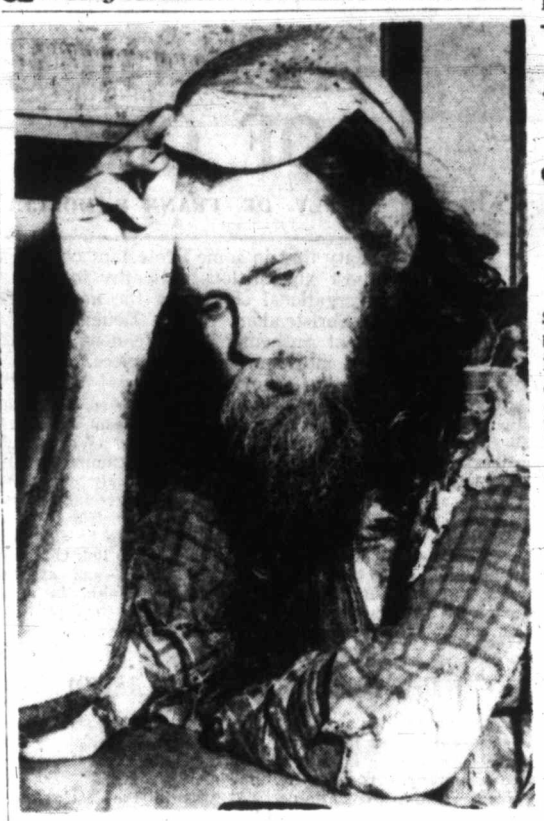
Land officials said the '59ers are but a few of the hundreds who have come here to homestead, and that the number grows every month. In the past month alone, more than 130 have filed homestead applications.

"That is twice the number who filed in the peak month a year ago," Mains said. "Nobody knows how big this great movement from all parts of the nation will grow."

Mayor 'Bugged' With Package Of Dead Flies

ILAN, Formosa (UPI)—Chen Ah-Tai, mayor of this town in central Formosa, received a "gift package" containing 1,000 dead flies and a note:

"Dear Mayor, I caught these flies in two hours," the note said. "This should make you think more about the health of your fellow townspeople. If you don't do something, we will continue to catch flies and send their dead bodies to you."



DENNIS SCOTT FARRELL
. . . saw no future.

Bearded, Tattered

Park's 'Ghost' Just Hermit Trying to Die

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A Second World War veteran, bearded and in tatters, told Friday night how he renounced civilization five years ago to live alone in the wilds of Griffith Park.

Dennis Scott Farrell, 32, was questioned by officers who found him while searching for a prowler suspect on North Vermont Avenue at the fringe of the park, which covers several thousand acres.

TREMBLED AT CONTACT

Officers said Farrell trembled at his first contact with humans in five years. Finally, he related that he was an infantry soldier in the war and was shot through the lungs on Okinawa.

Then he tried to explain his retirement to the life of a hermit.

Farrell said he lived on the leavings of picnic parties and spent the nights in caves or shelters built of lumber scraps.

He was not held. The officers offered him money for food and new clothing. He declined it.

"I can get along by myself," he whispered. Then he faded back into the park's protective covering.

HE'S THE GHOST

Police said Farrell undoubtedly is the "ghost of Griffith Park"—a shadowy figure occasionally spotted by park visitors.

Griffith Park is a hilly, canyon-slashed area 2½ miles long and two miles wide entirely surrounded by Los Angeles and suburban cities.

Brush-covered hills rise to 2,500 feet. Some areas are never visited.

Smoked Bear Routs Firemen

KANAZAWA, Japan (AP)—An angry mother bear Saturday routed 300 firemen fighting a forest fire outside the mountain town of Kamanaka. The flames forced the mother bear and two cubs out of their forest lair and the mother displayed her anger by taking out after the firefighters. No injuries were reported.

Comic Book Industry Dying; 'Virtue' and TV Responsible

NEW YORK (UPI) — The comic book at last is following the dime novel and the pulp paper magazine on the long downgrade toward possible oblivion.

The comic book, which has flourished for 20 years in spite of the bitter criticism of educators, clerics, psychologists, social workers and even the military authorities in Canada and the United States, is the victim of television competition and of the "cleanup code" forced on the industry five years ago.

Printing comic books is still a big business — some 600,000,000 are sold each year—but it is losing ground steadily and now has fallen in volume slightly behind the pocket book business, which was started in the depression like the comic books, but didn't grow nearly so fast.

Canada has a financial stake in the toboggan slide of the comic books because they are printed on newsprint—a considerable chunk of it imported by the United States from Canada.

The figures of the business decline are dramatic. The current sale is down from 1,000,000,000 back around 1953 and there are only 117 of the comic book titles on the newstand this year as against 500 around 1950.

The publishers almost unanimously blame their troubles on the "code" which they adopted in 1954 to combat state laws and indirect censorship by a host of organizations.

'HORRORS' BANNED

The code banned most of several hundred "horror" comics outright. It slashed heavily into both drawing and dialogue emphasizing sex, and compelled all the comics to tailor their plots to the motto "crime never pays."

"The kids just don't like it – they want thrills, not virtue," is the canstant wail of the publishers.

More Rebels Die

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—An army spokesman reported that 106 central Sumaran rebels were killed between March 16, 1958, and last Feb. 28. Another 363 were captured and 549 surrendered.

100 Miles--- All London

BEDFORD, England (UPI)—Sir Albert Richardson, past president of Britain's Royal Academy, predicted last night that London in the year 2,000 would extend 50 miles from the centre in all directions and would have immense blocks of houses.

The people will be "uniformly clad, municipally lodged, governmentally forced into schools and training establishments all of the same pattern," he told an audience here.

Whooping Cranes On Their Way

CORPUS CHRISTI, Tex. (AP) — At least 11 giant whooping cranes flew north yesterday toward their summer nesting grounds in the Northwest Territories.

An aerial check indicated 11 of the 32 rare whoopers which wintered at a wildlife refuge here have departed.

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Going South

Rebel Sells Farm

DOWAGIAC, Mich (AP) — Rebel farmer Stanley Yankus, who claimed the U.S. government's crop control laws were driving him from his native land, auctioned off his farm Saturday.

Yankus said he'll take the $30,000 he realized on the sale and go with his wife and three children to Australia where he hopes to make a new start.

SIX-YEAR FIGHT

The auction climaxed a six-year fight between the 40-year-old poultry farmer and the government over wheat allotment restrictions.

It cost him more than $5,000 in fines and penalties but the native of Chicago said the struggle won't be in vain if it draws attention to what he says are freedom-restricting laws.

Some 2,000 people attended the auction, carried on in a holiday-like atmosphere.

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